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ABSTRACT

Questionnaires were sent to one teacher and one counselor at each of 117 schools that had participated in Transescent Seminars held at the University of Wisconsin in Platteville. Responses were obtained from teachers and counselors and were analyzed in terms of counselor roles proposed in the Wisconsin Developmental Guidance Model. Both teachers and counselors completed identical forms, rating the extent of involvement of the counselor in each of 14 roles. The counselor role ranked highest by teachers and counselors was "Consultation with teachers about individual student concerns." The second ranked role according to teachers was "Consultation with parents." Teachers saw counselors as being more involved in this activity than counselors ranked themselves. The third ranked role according to teachers was "Individual counseling with students." The fourth ranked role according to teachers was "Consultation with administrators." Teachers and counselors were in close agreement in their ratings of consultation with teachers about individual student concerns and individual counseling with students. There were significant differences in the average ratings of only four roles: consultation with parents, referral of students to community agencies, consultation with teachers about classroom activity development, and consultation with teachers about professional concerns of the teacher. (ABL)

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TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF COUNSELOR ROLES

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The synchronicity of three events generated this article. First, the appearance of an article on counselor roles in the Wisconsin Counselor, Winter, pp. 16-18, provided a checklist of items. Second, the Transescent Seminar each summer at UW-Platteville provided a population of teachers and counselors who had worked together on a team project. Third, the promotion of the Wisconsin Developmental Guidance Model by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, through the publication of School Counseling Programs, a resource and planning guide, provided a current need for role clarification and communication.

After the Transescent Seminar during the summer of 1989, questionnaires were sent one teacher and the counselor at each of the 117 participating schools. Responses from 68 teachers and counselors (58 percent) are analyzed in terms of roles proposed in the Wisconsin Developmental Guidance Model. Both teachers and counselors completed identical forms, rating the extent of involvement of the counselor in each of 14 roles, within the specific project of the Transescent Seminar, and in all other activities at school.

The Wisconsin Developmental Guidance Model

"School counselors help all pupils by establishing individual, group, and classroom contacts with them, collaborating with teachers, and coordinating with other school or community guidance resources" (School Counseling Programs, p. 11). Perhaps a sixty or seventy hour week could accomplish all these goals. The results of this survey indicate relative levels of counselor activity. The Wisconsin Developmental Guidance Model (WDGM) organizes these goals in three levels of achievement.

Level I "Counseling"

"Involvement of others is primarily supportive."
"The focus is on the counselor and what can be accomplished with that limited delivery resource."
"Develop educational strategies to meet the needs of individual students who are experiencing difficulties."
"Provide counseling to students."

Level II "Collaborating"

"Utilizes the abilities of others on the school staff and

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coordinates their participation in guidance activities."
"Builds upon the unique skills of the school counselor in conjunction and collaboration with the other staff in the school."
"Assist with programs on topics such as death, divorce, abuse, and chemical dependency."
"Plan a team approach to providing guidance activities in the classroom."

Level III "Coordinating"

"The counselor and other human resources of the school and community are used as the delivery system."
"Uses the school program and also parental and community involvement and input."
"Ensure through individual or classroom based programs that developmental tasks will be addressed for all students."
"Coordinate programs that use school/community partnerships to create an awareness of the world of work."

Results of the Survey

The results of the survey will be presented in several ways. Averages give a simple comparison. Since the average may be the result of an unusual number of high and low scores, the percent of respondents selecting the highest and lowest ratings will also be given. Statistical analysis concerning the significant differences between the responses of teachers and counselors to the questionnaire was carried out using the T-test. Analysis was done on an IBM Model 30 using ABstat Version 6.02.

The Top Four Roles

1. The counselor role ranked highest by both teachers and counselors was "Consultation with teachers about individual students concerns." Sixty percent of the teachers and counselors chose a rating of five, the highest possible rating, while only three percent chose the low rating of one. The average of responses on the five point scale for teachers was 4.3 and for counselors was 4.5.

Apparently many teachers and counselors operate at Level II of the Wisconsin Developmental Model: "Building upon the skills of the counselor in conjunction and collaboration with the other staff in the school."

2. The second ranked role according to teachers was "Consultation with parents." Fifty-seven percent of the teachers and thirty-three percent of the counselors chose a rating of five, while only two percent chose the low rating of one. The average of responses for teachers was 4.3 and 3.9 for counselors, which was a significant difference.

In this sample, teachers see counselors as being more involved in

this Level III activity of the WDGM than counselors rank themselves: "Using the school program and also parental and community involvement."

3. The third ranked role according to teachers was "Individual counseling with students." Fifty-five percent of the teachers and sixty percent of the counselors chose a rating of five, while five percent chose the low rating of one. The average of responses for teachers was 4.3 and 4.4 for counselors. This item may be measuring Level I of the WDGM: "A focus on the counselor and what can be accomplished with that limited delivery resource."

4. The fourth ranked role according to teachers was "Consultation with administrators." Forty-five percent of the teachers and thirty-three percent of counselors chose a rating of five and five percent chose a low rating of one. The average of responses for teachers was 4.0 and 3.9 for counselors. This item may relate to any level of the WDGM, depending upon the topics discussed with administrators.

In summary, the four highest ranked items had an average score above 4.0 and almost half or more teachers chose the top rating of five. Three of the top four relate to consultation with teachers, parents, and administrators. Individual counseling, which is usually rated first by counselors, was rated third by teachers.

Teachers and counselors were in close agreement in their ratings of consultation with teachers about individual student concerns and individual counseling with students. However, in regard to consultation with parents, fifty-seven percent of the teachers chose a rating of five, while only thirty-three percent of the counselors chose a five. The ratings for consultation with administrators shows forty-five percent of the teachers selecting a rating of five, while only thirty-three percent of the counselors chose a five.

The Five Middle Roles

5. The fifth ranked role according to teachers was "Referral of students to community agencies." Thirty percent of the teachers gave this item a top rated five, and eight percent rated it a low one. The average of responses for teachers was 3.7 and 3.4 for counselors, which was a significant difference. Similar to the earlier item, "consultation with parents", teachers rated this role higher than counselors. "Develop a network of community referral agencies" is a Level II role. The Level III role of consultation with community agencies to develop partnerships was ranked lower as number seven.

6. The sixth ranked role according to teachers was "Small group work with students." Thirty-two percent of the teachers gave this item a five rating and nine percent rated it a low one. The

average of responses for teachers was 3.7 and 3.8 for counselors. This would be a Level I role if the counselor conducted group counseling independently of other staff or Level II if collaboration with other staff is involved.

7. The seventh ranked role according to teachers was "Consultation with community agencies." Twenty percent of the teachers gave this item a top rated five, and six percent rated it a low one. The average of responses for teachers and counselors was 3.3. This is an example of Level III activities that "Use school/community partnerships."

8. The eighth ranked role according to teachers was "Administrative duties of the counselor." Nineteen percent of the teachers gave this item a five rating, and fourteen percent rated it a low one. The average of responses for teachers was 3.2 and 3.1 for counselors. This could be a Level I activity if duties are restricted to individual projects of the counselor; Level III if projects involved outside agencies.

9. The ninth ranked role according to teachers was "Training and development activities of the counselor." Sixteen percent of the teachers gave this item a top rated five, and thirteen percent rated it a low one. The average of responses for teachers was 3.2 and 3.3 for counselors

In summmary, the middle five roles had averages between 3.2 and 3.7 and between sixteen and thirty-one percent of teachers choosing a top five rating. Eight to thirteen percent rated these items a low one. For each of these middle ranked roles, more teachers chose a top rating of five than chose the bottom rating of one. Two of these roles, administrative duties and professional development, are assumed at all levels of the WDGM. Two of the roles are reflected in Level III, referral networks and consultation with commmunity agencies. The group work role may reflect either a Level I activity by the counselor or the Level II function: "Assist with programs on topics such as death, divorce, abuse, and chemical dependency."

The Lowest Ranked Roles

10. The tenth ranked role according to teachers was "Classroom counseling cooperatively with a teacher." Nineteen percent of the teachers gave this item a top rated five, and twenty-five percent rated it a low one. The average of responses for teachers was 2.9 and 3.1 for counselors. This would seem to be a Level II activity.

11. The eleventh ranked role according to teachers was "Consultation with teachers about personal concerns of the teacher at school." Sixteen percent of the teachers gave this a rop rated five, and twenty-nine percent rated it a low one. The average of responses for teachers was 2.8 and 3.1 for counselors.

12. The twelfth ranked role according to teachers was "Classroom counseling without a teacher." Nineteen percent of teachers gave this a top rated five, and twenty-three percent rated it a low one. The average of responses for teachers was 2.8 and 3.0 for counselors.

13. The thirteenth ranked role according to teachers was "Consultation with teachers about classroom activity development." Twenty percent of the teachers gave this a top rated five, and twenty-six percent rated it a low one. The average of responses for teachers was 2.7 and 3.0 for counselors, which was a significant difference. In this survey, counselors rated consultation with teachers higher than the teachers did.

14. The fourteenth ranked role according to teachers was "Consultation with teachers about professional concerns of the teacher." Fifteen percent of the teachers gave this a top rated five, and thirty-two percent rated it a low one. The average of responses for teachers was 2.7 and 3.1 for counselors, which was a significant difference. Counselors again rated consultation with teachers higher than the teachers did.

In summary, the bottom ranked five roles received average responses from 2.7 to 2.9, and were given five ratings from only sixteen to twenty percent of the teachers. At least twenty-five percent of the teachers rated each of these roles as a low one. For each of these bottom ranked roles, more teachers chose a bottom rating of one than chose a top rating of five.

In general, teachers and counselors agreed in their ratings of counselor roles. There were significant differences in the average ratings on only four roles: consultation with parents, referral of students to community agencies, consultation with teachers about classroom activity development, and consultation with teachers about professional concerns of the teacher. A discouraging finding in relationship to the WDGM is that four Level II and III roles, collaborating and coordinating, are in the bottom five: classroom counseling with the teacher, and consultation with teachers. A comparison of teacher and counselor ratings within the bottom five roles reveals a consistent pattern. Teachers selected more higher ratings and more lower ratings. On all of the bottom five roles, at least forty percent of the teachers chose a one or two, while the highest percentage of one or two ratings from counselors on the same items was thirty-three percent. On each of the bottom five roles, teachers also selected more high ratings of five than counselors.

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